

FRED UPTON, MICHIGAN
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HENRY A. WAXMAN, CALIFORNIA
RANKING MEMBER

ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE
2125 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6115

Majority (202) 225-2927
Minority (202) 225-3641

September 1, 2011

Ms. Kathryn Ruemmler
Counsel to the President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Ms. Ruemmler:

Pursuant to Rules X and XI of the U.S. House of Representatives, we write today seeking documents and information regarding the role of the White House in the review of loan guarantees issued by the Department of Energy (DOE). In particular, we are interested in the loan guarantee awarded to Solyndra, Inc. (Solyndra), of Fremont, California.

In September 2009, Solyndra was the first recipient of a DOE loan guarantee, totaling \$535 million. The credit subsidy for the Solyndra loan guarantee was provided through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), or stimulus. Yesterday, the company closed its doors and announced its intention to file for bankruptcy.

We have learned from our investigation that White House officials monitored Solyndra's application, and communicated with DOE and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) officials during the course of their review in 2009 and when those officials were restructuring the Solyndra deal this year. Documents received by the Committee also show that DOE and OMB officials were aware of the White House's interest in the Solyndra loan guarantee. In addition, we are also aware that a major investor in Solyndra, George Kaiser, was a bundler for President Obama's 2008 campaign.

President Obama and other Administration officials have repeatedly touted Solyndra and its prospects in visits to its manufacturing facility and in speeches. Vice President Biden appeared via satellite at the Solyndra groundbreaking on September 4, 2009, to announce that DOE had finalized its loan guarantee to the company, stating that the Solyndra deal was "part of the unprecedented investment this Administration is making in renewable energy and exactly what the [American Recovery and Reinvestment Act] is all about." DOE Secretary Steven Chu attended the groundbreaking event as well, and stated that projects like Solyndra would be the start of the "second industrial revolution" in clean energy technology. When President Obama visited the company in May 2010 to tour its manufacturing facilities, he noted that "the true engine of economic growth will always be companies like Solyndra."

Despite these statements on its prospects, Solyndra has experienced serious financial setbacks since receiving the DOE loan guarantee. Just after the President's visit to Solyndra, the company cancelled a planned initial public offering. In November 2010, Solyndra announced that it was postponing a planned expansion of its facility and laying off 135 temporary or part-time workers and 40 full-time employees. In February of this year, DOE was forced to restructure the terms of Solyndra's loan guarantee due to the company's financial problems. At that time, Solyndra's investors entered into a \$75 million credit facility with the company, with the option of a second \$75 million facility.

Other problems with the loan guarantee program were the subject of an October 25, 2010, briefing memorandum addressed to President Obama from Carol Browner, then-Director of the White House Office of Energy and Climate Change Policy; Ron Klain, then-Chief of Staff to Vice President Joe Biden; and Lawrence Summers, then-Director of the National Economic Council. That memorandum raised several concerns about the implementation of the DOE loan guarantee program.

In order to better understand the role of the White House with respect to the review of the Solyndra loan guarantee and the Administration's support of this guarantee, even in the face of Solyndra's deepening financial problems, we request that you contact Committee staff to schedule a briefing on these matters to take place no later than September 12. In addition, we request that the White House provide the following:

1. All documents containing communications relating to the \$535 million loan guarantee to Solyndra, Inc., between the White House and Solyndra, Inc.
2. All documents containing communications relating to the \$535 million loan guarantee to Solyndra, Inc, between the White House and the investors in Solyndra, Inc., including the administrators, employees, attorneys, agents, advisors, consultants, staff, principals, or any other persons acting on behalf of those investors.


Please contact Committee staff no later than 5:00 p.m. on September 6, 2011, to discuss a schedule for production. This schedule should provide for production of the documents no later than September 12, 2011. An attachment to this letter provides additional information about how to respond to the Committee's request.

Please do not hesitate to have your staff contact Karen Christian and Todd Harrison with the Committee with any questions about this letter.

Sincerely,



Fred Upton
Chairman



Cliff Stearns
Chairman
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

Letter to Ms. Kathryn Ruemmler
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cc: The Honorable Henry A. Waxman, Ranking Member

The Honorable Diana DeGette, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

RESPONDING TO COMMITTEE DOCUMENT REQUESTS

In responding to the document request, please apply the instructions and definitions set forth below:

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In complying with this request, you should produce all responsive documents that are in your possession, custody, or control or otherwise available to you, regardless of whether the documents are possessed directly by you.
2. Documents responsive to the request should not be destroyed, modified, removed, transferred, or otherwise made inaccessible to the Committee.
3. In the event that any entity, organization, or individual named in the request has been, or is currently, known by any other name, the request should be read also to include such other names under that alternative identification.
4. Each document should be produced in a form that may be copied by standard copying machines.
5. When you produce documents, you should identify the paragraph(s) and/or clause(s) in the Committee's request to which the document responds.
6. Documents produced pursuant to this request should be produced in the order in which they appear in your files and should not be rearranged. Any documents that are stapled, clipped, or otherwise fastened together should not be separated. Documents produced in response to this request should be produced together with copies of file labels, dividers, or identifying markers with which they were associated when this request was issued. Indicate the office or division and person from whose files each document was produced.
7. Each folder and box should be numbered, and a description of the contents of each folder and box, including the paragraph(s) and/or clause(s) of the request to which the documents are responsive, should be provided in an accompanying index.
8. Responsive documents must be produced regardless of whether any other person or entity possesses non-identical or identical copies of the same document.
9. The Committee requests electronic documents in addition to paper productions. If any of the requested information is available in machine-readable or electronic form (such as on a computer server, hard drive, CD, DVD, back up tape, or removable computer media such as thumb drives, flash drives, memory cards, and external hard drives), you should immediately consult with Committee staff to determine the appropriate format in which to produce the information. Documents produced in electronic format should be organized, identified, and indexed electronically in a manner comparable to the organizational structure called for in (6) and (7) above.

10. If any document responsive to this request was, but no longer is, in your possession, custody, or control, or has been placed into the possession, custody, or control of any third party and cannot be provided in response to this request, you should identify the document (stating its date, author, subject and recipients) and explain the circumstances under which the document ceased to be in your possession, custody, or control, or was placed in the possession, custody, or control of a third party.

11. If any document responsive to this request was, but no longer is, in your possession, custody or control, state:

- a. how the document was disposed of;
- b. the name, current address, and telephone number of the person who currently has possession, custody or control over the document;
- c. the date of disposition;
- d. the name, current address, and telephone number of each person who authorized said disposition or who had or has knowledge of said disposition.

12. If any document responsive to this request cannot be located, describe with particularity the efforts made to locate the document and the specific reason for its disappearance, destruction or unavailability.

13. If a date or other descriptive detail set forth in this request referring to a document, communication, meeting, or other event is inaccurate, but the actual date or other descriptive detail is known to you or is otherwise apparent from the context of the request, you should produce all documents which would be responsive as if the date or other descriptive detail were correct.

14. The request is continuing in nature and applies to any newly discovered document, regardless of the date of its creation. Any document not produced because it has not been located or discovered by the return date should be produced immediately upon location or discovery subsequent thereto.

15. All documents should be bates-stamped sequentially and produced sequentially. In a cover letter to accompany your response, you should include a total page count for the entire production, including both hard copy and electronic documents.

16. Two sets of the documents should be delivered to the Committee, one set to the majority staff in Room 316 of the Ford House Office Building and one set to the minority staff in Room 564 of the Ford House Office Building. You should consult with Committee majority staff regarding the method of delivery prior to sending any materials.

17. In the event that a responsive document is withheld on any basis, including a claim of privilege, you should provide the following information concerning any such document: (a) the reason the document is not being produced; (b) the type of document; (c) the general subject matter; (d) the date, author and addressee; (e) the relationship of the author and addressee to each

other; and (f) any other description necessary to identify the document and to explain the basis for not producing the document. If a claimed privilege applies to only a portion of any document, that portion only should be withheld and the remainder of the document should be produced. As used herein, "claim of privilege" includes, but is not limited to, any claim that a document either may or must be withheld from production pursuant to any statute, rule, or regulation.

18. If the request cannot be complied with in full, it should be complied with to the extent possible, which should include an explanation of why full compliance is not possible.

19. Upon completion of the document production, you should submit a written certification, signed by you or your counsel, stating that: (1) a diligent search has been completed of all documents in your possession, custody, or control which reasonably could contain responsive documents; (2) documents responsive to the request have not been destroyed, modified, removed, transferred, or otherwise made inaccessible to the Committee since the date of receiving the Committee's request or in anticipation of receiving the Committee's request, and (3) all documents identified during the search that are responsive have been produced to the Committee, identified in a privilege log provided to the Committee, as described in (17) above, or identified as provided in (10), (11) or (12) above.

DEFINITIONS

1. The term "document" means any written, recorded, or graphic matter of any nature whatsoever, regardless of how recorded, and whether original or copy, including but not limited to, the following: memoranda, reports, expense reports, books, manuals, instructions, financial reports, working papers, records, notes, letters, notices, confirmations, telegrams, receipts, appraisals, pamphlets, magazines, newspapers, prospectuses, interoffice and intra-office communications, electronic mail ("e-mail"), instant messages, calendars, contracts, cables, notations of any type of conversation, telephone call, meeting or other communication, bulletins, printed matter, computer printouts, invoices, transcripts, diaries, analyses, returns, summaries, minutes, bills, accounts, estimates, projections, comparisons, messages, correspondence, press releases, circulars, financial statements, reviews, opinions, offers, studies and investigations, questionnaires and surveys, power point presentations, spreadsheets, and work sheets. The term "document" includes all drafts, preliminary versions, alterations, modifications, revisions, changes, and amendments to the foregoing, as well as any attachments or appendices thereto. The term "document" also means any graphic or oral records or representations of any kind (including, without limitation, photographs, charts, graphs, voice mails, microfiche, microfilm, videotapes, recordings, and motion pictures), electronic and mechanical records or representations of any kind (including, without limitation, tapes, cassettes, disks, computer server files, computer hard drive files, CDs, DVDs, back up tape, memory sticks, recordings, and removable computer media such as thumb drives, flash drives, memory cards, and external hard drives), and other written, printed, typed, or other graphic or recorded matter of any kind or nature, however produced or reproduced, and whether preserved in writing, film, tape, electronic format, disk, videotape or otherwise. A document bearing any notation not part of the original text is considered to be a separate document. A draft or non-identical copy is a separate document within the meaning of this term.

2. The term "documents in your possession, custody or control" means (a) documents that are in your possession, custody, or control, whether held by you or your past or present agents, employees, or representatives acting on your behalf; (b) documents that you have a legal right to obtain, that you have a right to copy, or to which you have access; and (c) documents that have been placed in the possession, custody, or control of any third party.

3. The term "communication" means each manner or means of disclosure, transmission, or exchange of information, in the form of facts, ideas, opinions, inquiries, or otherwise, regardless of means utilized, whether oral, electronic, by document or otherwise, and whether face-to-face, in a meeting, by telephone, mail, e-mail, instant message, discussion, release, personal delivery, or otherwise.

4. The terms "and" and "or" should be construed broadly and either conjunctively or disjunctively as necessary to bring within the scope of this request any information which might otherwise be construed to be outside its scope. The singular includes the plural number, and vice versa. The masculine includes the feminine and neuter genders.

5. The terms "person" or "persons" mean natural persons, firms, partnerships, associations, limited liability corporations and companies, limited liability partnerships, corporations, subsidiaries, divisions, departments, joint ventures, proprietorships, syndicates, other legal, business or government entities, or any other organization or group of persons, and all subsidiaries, affiliates, divisions, departments, branches, and other units thereof.

6. The terms "referring" or "relating," with respect to any given subject, mean anything that constitutes, contains, embodies, reflects, identifies, states, refers to, deals with, or is in any manner whatsoever pertinent to that subject.

7. The term "White House" means and refers to any its offices, subdivisions, entities, officials, administrators, employees, attorneys, agents, advisors, consultants, staff, or any other persons acting on behalf or under the control or direction of the White House, including the Office of the Vice President and its subdivisions, entities, officials, administrators, employees, attorneys, agents, advisors, consultants, staff, or any other persons acting on behalf or under the control or direction of the Office of the Vice President.

8. The term "investor" means and refers to any individual or entity that invested or committed any money, capital, or anything of value to Solyndra, Inc., including their offices, subdivisions, entities, officials, administrators, employees, attorneys, agents, advisors, consultants, staff, or any other persons acting on behalf or under the control or direction of the investor.

9. The term "Solyndra, Inc." means and refers to any of its offices, subdivisions, entities, officials, administrators, employees, attorneys, agents, advisors, consultants, staff, or any other persons acting on behalf or under the control or direction of Solyndra, Inc.

10. The terms “you” or “your” mean and refers to

For government recipients:

“You” or “your” means and refers to you as a natural person and the United States and any of its agencies, offices, subdivisions, entities, officials, administrators, employees, attorneys, agents, advisors, consultants, staff, or any other persons acting on your behalf or under your control or direction; and includes any other person(s) defined in the document request letter.